CHAPTER VI

MAN AND ANIMALS
Animals as food: Since gratitude for the gift of God is also a form of worship, eating may be considered a part of religion in the sense that definite prescriptions have been revealed in the Holy Quran with respect to the kind of food which can be consumed by the believers. While all good and clean things contributing to the building of the body may be eaten, blood, flesh of swine and carcasses of animals cannot be eaten.

"Eat of the wholesome things with which we have provided you and give God thanks. He hath forbidden you carrion, and blood and swines' flesh." (Latif, 1969)

We have been forbidden to eat carrion and blood because these are articles of food which cause disgust to any refined person (Ali, 1938). Again, there are a number of parasites which live in blood and several groups of microorganisms thrive well in the dead and decomposed animal tissues. Thus, eating of such substances could easily endanger human life. Similarly, pork and ham is very rich in cholesterol and is harmful to man.

The helminth parasite, Trichinella spiralis also occurs in pigs and causes trichinosis. This is a serious disease and the larvae of T. spiralis affect the spinal cord and brain of human subjects. Echinostoma malayanum and Taenia solium are also found in the pigs and cause intestinal disturbances in man.

1. Al-Baqarah: 172-173
The good are the wholesome foods which contain nutrients like ascorbic acid that prevents hemorrhages, thiamine whose deficiency results in beriberi, riboflavin which checks the loss of hair and eye disorders and niacin which prevents the skin disease called pellagra. Meat is one such diet. It is composed of muscles and connective tissues, is a delicacy to eat and contains proteins, iron and phosphorous in health-giving quantities. The meat of sheep, goats and cattle is rich in fat whereas that of camel provides the much needed salts to people who live in the tropics and often suffer from cramps because of the loss of sodium chloride through perspiration. Mutton, beef and poultry provide us with enough vitamins, proteins, fats, calcium and iron.

The dietary significance of pigeons has long been recognised by the physicians who have been recommending such meat to patients suffering from paralysis.

In fish, the Almighty Allah has given us an abundance of food and a good source of protein. Being prolific breeders in ponds, lakes, rivers and the sea they are easily available to the common man and provide him a food value of 300 to 600 calories per pound. The oil obtained from the liver of Cod and Shark fishes is also a rich source of vitamins A.

The pursuit of fish is therefore, world wide though the bulk of them comes from the sea. The striped base is one of the most excellent food fish and is 50 to 100 pounds in weight.
Should we therefore not be thankful to God for this unique gift of His to mankind.

(1) وما يستوي البحران هذان عند نبات
سنغ فراي وهذان طح اجساج
ومن كلك تا كلخون لحما خريباً

"And the two waters are not alike - the one fresh, sweet, and pleasant to drink, and the other, saltish, bitter. Yet, from both, ye obtain for food fresh fish." (Latif, 1969)

The food prescriptions of the Holy Quran are further developed in Hadith. Thus, Imam Mohammad (may Allah be pleased with him) has described locusts as 'pre-slaughtered animals and Imam Abu Hanifa (may Allah be pleased with him) concurs with this view. Hazarat Abdullah bin Umar bin Khatab (may Allah be pleased with him) when asked to express his opinion about these insects, remarked 'I would very much like to have a bag full of locusts and eat them'.

Locusts contain a large amount of moisture and are highly rich in fat and proteins. The salt and glucose content is quite high and as such these insects provide energy to people travelling over long distances in the desert. The ancient Assyrians ate them and even today locusts are sold in open markets in Kuwait, Yemen and other countries. The Prophet Mohammad Sallallahu (may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has permitted us to eat this energy-giving food.

1. Al-Fatir : 12
2. Imam Malik : Moatta Bab al-jarrad
Thus Hazarat Abu Waleed (may Allah be pleased with him) was told by Hazarat Abu Yafoor bin abi Oofi (may Allah be pleased with him) that during the course of six or seven battles, locusts were the only diet that the Holy Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and his followers ate.

The manner in which food animals should be slaughtered has been fully described in hadith and the aim is to drain off all the blood so that the toxins contained in the blood do not reach the body of the person eating such meat.

Blood is a tissue with dual function. The red blood carpuscles transport oxygen for respiratory purposes whereas carbon dioxide is removed through the liver. Kidneys also serve as important organs of excretion. The haemoglobin found in the red blood cells have evolved in diverse ways. While the heme is the same, globins differ in respect of amino acid composition, molecular size and immunological properties (Prosser and Brown, 1962). Several haemoglobins occur in one species so that it is the type of the globin which determines the oxygen combining properties of the blood of an animal and its ultimate health. It is also possible that mixing of globins with varying amino acids composition may endanger the life of the person who may receive them from the blood of other animals.

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1. Bukhari: Al-Jami al-Sahih Kitab al-Zabaiah
as a result of selective absorption through the intestine.

The draining of blood through slaughtering has another advantage. Quite often the entire animal cannot be consumed at one and the same time and has to be preserved for as long as possible. Since the moisture content of the slaughtered animal is less because of the draining of the blood, such meat is less liable to the attack of putrefactive bacteria. This is why the smoked 'Kababs' can be preserved for a much longer period of time than meat curry. Indeed, the meat which contains blood decomposes more readily than the one from which all blood has been drained off (Maqbool, 1982).

The above account makes it clear that meat is a stable diet and so we have been permitted to eat it. Indeed, moderation and judicious thinking is an integral part of Islam. Thus, while excessive fasting which may render a person unfit to offer his prayers is forbidden excessive eating of meat resulting in indigestion is also not favoured. The muftis and other moralists have also formulated certain rules concerning animals which in their opinion are clean and may be eaten. Animals like the birds of prey and crawling vertebrates may be eaten if one desires to eat them. But no believer can eat 'maitah' which in Islamic terminology means an animal that has not been slain in the ritually prescribed fashion and whose flesh is laden with blood.
Food from Animals: The complete food known as milk is a fluid which is secreted by the mammary glands of animals. It has been used by human beings of all ages and nothing could better sum up its food value than the promise of a garden in the heaven in which there would be rivers of milk whose flavour would never change.

"The similitude of the Heaven promised to the righteous is that of a garden wherein flow streams the water of which does not get stale, and of milk, the taste of which never changes." (Latif, 1969)

Indeed the milk of cattle is a wholesome drink containing growth promoting proteins and other nutrients. It is a sign of the wonderful way in which Allah sustains His creation. A female cattle produces milk in excess to the requirements of her young one and this is consumed by us.

"Verily in cattle there is a lesson for you. We give you to drink of what is inside their bodies, coming from a conjunction between the contents of the intestine and the blood a milk pure and pleasant for those who drink it." (Bucaïle, 1978)

The dietary importance of milk has been further emphasized in the Hadith. Thus, it is reported from Hazrat

1. Mohammad : 15
2. Al-Nahl : 66
Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him) graciously told his 'Ummah' that no food is more nutritive than the milk of a cattle.

The honey bee is unique among animals because Allah has ordained it to build its combs on the mountains, on trees and at the top of buildings and collect nectar from different kinds of flowers and then produce honey for the healing of mankind. Thus the bees work for nothing and through intricate process of bee digestion, ripening and dehydration convert the nectar of flowers into honey which is not only an excellent food but also a medicine. It contains aromatic constituents obtained from the flowers that are responsible for the aroma, flavour and bouquet of honey as also valuable minerals (salts of calcium, phosphorus, iron, potassium, sodium, manganese and sulphur) which are perfectly assimilated. Honey also contains digestive enzymes. It is these qualities which make honey a kind of food which does not require any digestion and can be directly assimilated into the blood stream. One pound of honey contains 1.82 grams of proteins, 324 grams of carbohydrates, 18.2 milligrams of calcium, 86.1 milligrams of phosphorus and 5.2 milligrams of iron (Milum, 1961).

1. Ibn-i-Majah : al Sunan Bab Fi Laban
Perhaps the above description could be the biological explanation of the following verses of the Holy Quran.

١١٠٠٠(١) "And thy Lord inspired the Bee, "Provide thyself with places to dwell in the mountains and in the trees and in what men do build for thee; Then feed thou out of every kind of fruit and pursue assiduously the way of living prescribed for thee by the Lord."

From its belly cometh forth a liquid of diverse hues which serves as medicine for man." (Latif, 1969)

The medicinal properties of honey were known to the Holy Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and so he cured a patient suffering from stomach ailment by prescribing honey for him. And this was done despite the patient's repeated protest that honey was not doing any good to him.

١١٠٠٠(٢) "...Indeed there is cure in honey. Hazrat Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) heard it from the Holy Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him) that the use of honey and recitation of Quran bring health and happiness.

1. Al-Nahl : 68-69
2. Bukhari : al-Jami Al-Sahih Kitab al-Tib
3. Ibn-i-Majah : al Sunan Bab Fi al-Asl
Animals in the Service of Man: Of the innumerable blessings of Allah are the quadrupeds from which we derive many benefits.

See they not that among what we have ourselves done, we have brought forth the quadrupeds which they possess, and which we have subjected to them. On some they ride and others they use for food? And in them they find beverages and profitable uses. Will they not then feel thankful (to God)?

(Latif, 1969)

The holy verses cited above clearly indicate the significant role which animals play in the life of man and the purposes to which they may be put. Islam has always permitted its followers to hunt and slaughter the good animals to provide meat to eat and use them for traction, as a source of power and for transport. The dog served us as a guard animal besides helping in hunting operations. The sheep yield pure wool and milk of good quality. We obtain a range of materials for clothing, adornment and furnishings from our domesticated animals. However, no systematic approach has been made to make an in-depth study of these blessings of the Almighty Allah and, therefore, the present author considered it desirable to describe in a scientific way the uses, domestication and production efficiency of certain animals in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Quran.

1. Yasin : 71-73
Camels are an important source of power and transport in hot and dry deserts. They belong to the genus Camelus of the order Artiodactyla. The longer Arabian Camel, Camelus dromedarius has a single hump and can carry a load of about 500 pounds across the desert. It is, therefore, no wonder that through domestication and selective breeding, the Al-Murra tribe of the eastern Rab'al-Khali have succeeded in developing a very useful breed called 'Umaniya'. The 'Umaniya' breed is renowned for its endurance of long periods without water, three to four days in summer and thirty days in spring (Ann 1961).

The Camel is certainly a most peculiar animal. Allah has made him a real stupid creature and it is only because of stupidity that this savage and ill-tempered animal which does not hesitate to lash the hand or the arm of his master remains serviceable to us. Due to its ability of manufacturing water in the body by oxidation of fat and walking on the sand with the help of its wide-spreading feet, it has rightly been called the 'ship of the desert' and we may travel on its back across the rather impassable desert regions.

1. Al-Hajj : 27
It is the most important beast of burden in Mongolia and provides cheap and convenient transport. Should we not then proclaim the glory of Allah, the Ultimate Reality. Indeed these animals carry our heavy loads to far off places that we cannot otherwise reach except with great difficulty.

(1) وتحمله اعطائكم الى بلادكم
تكونوا بالخير.spanish

"And they (cattle) carry your heavy loads to (distant) towns which you cannot reach otherwise except with much personal discomfort to yourselves." (Latif, 1969)

The cattle are our real supports of life. The cow, buffalo, sheep and goat provide us with staple food and help in agricultural operations. They are dual or triple purpose animals which provide us with tractive power, milk, milk products, meat and even garments.

(2) والانعام خلقه ربه
ومنا فاعمنا هذا

"And the cattle, hath He created for you: in them ye have warm garments and gainful use; and some of them ye use for food." (Latif, 1969)

The teachings given in the above verses may be explained by citing the example of the domestic buffalo known as 'al-jamoss' in Arab countries. The domestic buffalo is the principal source of tractive power for farm produce, production of milk, butter fat and meat. In the United Arab Republic it has become a symbol of prosperity. Most of the 'ghue', butter and fat used

1. Al-Nahl : 07
2. Al-Nahl : 05
in India and Pakistan comes from this animal. In Bangladesh, buffaloes are the major work animals. As pointed out by Fahim Uddin (1975) the buffalo is the ideal draft animal for all agricultural operations connected with the production of rice under warm and humid conditions.

Another useful animal is the faithful dog which has served man as an excellent guard animal. It also helps us in hunting operations.

(1) وتخسهم أيقاَنًا وهم رقود ونقيبٌ من الليثين وذات الشمل وكلبهم باستدراكهم
با لوصيّ لواطمهم ولوليتهم فدفروا رأ
وفيهم ربعًا

"And one might deem them awake whereas they were asleep and we were turning them now to the right and now to the left, while their dog with paws outstretched lay at the entrance. Had anyone come suddenly upon them, he would surely have turned back in fight, filled with fear." (Latif, 1969)

The other Quranic injunction concerning dogs relates to its ability as a beast of prey.

(2) احل لكم الطيور وما طغت من الجواز رح كليبين تعلمون سما
علَهُم الكَلِبُ فلَعَلَ تَلَفَ مَا سالتكم عليه

"And eat also (the flesh of the animal) which beasts of prey seize for you - of the beasts of prey whom you have trained as directed to you by God." (Latif, 1969)

1. Al-Kahaf : 18
2. Al-Maidah : 04
The commandments of Allah have further been elaborated in Al-Hadith. Our Holy Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has permitted us to hunt with a hound who has been trained for this purpose. We are even allowed to eat the prey seized by an untrained dog, if it can be slaughtered according to Shariat.

Dogs are generally regarded as untouchable animals but, according to Imam Mohammad (may Allah be pleased with him), we can keep a dog for herding our goats, looking after our fields and for guarding our houses.

But despite our having been allowed to keep a dog in our homes, we are not permitted to mix with him. And this is what it should be because the dogs often suffer from a disease called rabies. This is a fatal disease which may be transmitted to man if a diseased dog licks or bites him. There is no treatment known for this disease and therefore preventive measures have to be carefully adopted. This could be the reason why the Holy Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him) ordained his 'Ummah' to thoroughly wash all utensils seven times with clean

2. Imam Malik : Moatta Bab Iqtina al-Kilab
mud if it has been licked by a dog.

The horse is a distinguished member of the class Mammalia. He is an important source of rapid transit on land. Speed, agility, affectionate nature, extreme sensitiveness and long memory has made the horse a prestigious companion of man. And we recite:

(1)

And of these (hath He provided you with) horses, mules and asses that you may ride them and to give you dignity: and He hath created (many other) things of which you have no knowledge."

(Latif, 1969)

Our Holy Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has also remarked that those who possess horses are indeed a happy lot as horses bring them peace and prosperity.

(2)

Animal products of commerce: The skin of a slaughtered animal has its own value. Hides and skins obtained from such animals are of a much superior type than those obtained from the skins of non-slaughtered animals. This is due to the fact that aluminium

1. Tirmizi : al-Jami Bab Fi Sur al-Kalb
2. Al-Nahl : 08
3. Tirmizi : al-Jami Bab Fi fasl al-Khail
and chromium which are generally employed for tanning purposes.

penetrate the skin of the slaughtered animals more effectively
than that of non-slaughtered ones. Again, the slaughtered animals
can be skinned more easily than the non-slaughtered ones. Their
skins contain very little adipose tissue and flesh adhered to
them in comparison to the skins of the non-slaughtered animals
and therefore fetch greater profits. Thus, when the Holy Prophet
(may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him) saw a dead goat
he enquired as to why the owner had not derived any benefit by
skinning it. And when those present on the occasion submitted
that it was not permissible to make use of dead animals, the
Holy Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him)
graciously remarked that it was only the eating of the flesh of
such animals that was prohibited.

1. Imam Malik-Moatta Bab Fi Dibagh al-maitah

The hide of buffalo is thick and heavy and of great economic
importance. It can be tanned into strong leather which can be
used for the manufacture of harness, saddlery, straps, belts and
shoes. Horns of buffaloes are used to produce combs and decorative
table wares while the bones of buffaloes are used for the production
of bone meal.
Sheep is yet another animal of great economic importance. It gives us wool from which clothes, furnishings and carpets are made.

"And God hath given you dwellings to rest in: and He hath given you the skins of animals to make of them tents, light enough for you to carry on your journey (and make use of) when you halt; and from their wool, soft fur and hair, hath He afforded you with means of comfort and also provision to enjoy for a time." (Latif, 1969)

The sea is indeed a treasure of wealth and how grateful we are to the Almighty Allah Who has subjected it to us and has taught us to build ships that traverse along the unfathomed waters. Besides capturing fish for food and medicinal purposes (cod-liver oil is a rich source of vitamins), we also obtain articles of commerce from the sea. Pearls are one such precious commodity. In nature, pearls are formed by aquatic animals belonging to the phylum Mollusca. They are a real 'bounty of God' for a five gram pearl may cost as much as three to four thousand rupees. No wonder, therefore, that man has always been diving to take out one of oyster shells from the sea to collect pearls from which he makes one of the most expensive of all ornaments.

1. Al-Nahl: 80
2. Al-Nahl: 14
"And He it is who hath subjected for you the sea that you may have for your food, fresh fish out of it, and bring forth therefrom what you may use for your ornaments." (Latif, 1969)

Yet another bounty which we seek from the sea are the sponges. These are of considerable economic importance yielding an annual world production of millions of dollars. The uses of sponges are many. The ancient Greeks used sponges soaked in honey to pacify their babies while the Roman soldiers carried them to be used as drinking vessels. Today sponges are employed for cleaning the wounds, washing floors and making garments.

Destructive animals: No matter where we live and how we live some unwanted animal is there to invade us. Tiny, repulsive and seemingly inferior lice give us typhus fever while the locusts ruin our crops. Indeed, Allah, if He so desires causes misery to the unfaithful through the agency of these destructive creatures.

1. Al-A'raf: 133
to even have a hair-cut during the period of Haj, permission
has been granted to kill certain harmful animals even while
in Ahram. Hazrat Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her)
has reported that our Holy Prophet (may the peace and blessings
of Allah be on him) has permitted the killing of five injurious
pests namely the rats, rabid dogs, crows, kites and scorpions
during the period of Haj.

The wisdom of the above sanction of the Holy Prophet
(may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him) becomes clear
when we find that rats and mice constitute recurrent plagues and
cause heavy losses to agriculturists. They pillage harvested
fields, consume and spoil huge quantities of food and goods in
warehouses and granaries besides harbouring noxious disease organisms.

The common crow which is generally regarded a scavenger
is an important vector of viral encephalitis and so is the kite
in so far as ornithosis is concerned. They readily scoop down
on meat and meat products and snatch them away from our hands.

The sting of a scorpion is irritating and the poison it
injects acts as a neurotoxin in causing paralysis. The diseased
rabid dog suffering from an infectious disease of the central
nervous system contains the virus of the disease in its saliva.

and can transmit the fatal disease to man and other warm blooded animals. It is therefore, absolutely necessary that such dogs be put to sleep.

Such then is the concept of pest management in Islam. Is it not amazing how clearly the fundamentals of epidemiology were told to us centuries before experiments could be designed by the biologists to show the role of animal agents of human diseases. Indeed Allah afforded men the knowledge of what he knew not.

Kindness to animals: One of the basic teachings of Islam relates to kindness to others, be they human or animals.

"And do not with your own hands work for your own ruin and do good, for God verily loveth those who do good." (Latif, 1969)

Should we therefore not be kind to animals who have been created for us and from whom we get food, drink, garments and other commercial articles. They certainly need care and kindness. We should do all that we can to provide them with uncontaminated food and clean uncontaminated abode. The Holy Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has directed us to give the camels their due while travelling in green pastures. We should allow them enough time to graze and should try to cross the dry desert as quickly as possible so as to cause them the minimum of discomfort.

1. Al-Alaq: 5
2. Al-Baqarah: 195
Also while camping at night, we should find for them a place free of vermins.

Hazrat Ibne Omar (may Allah be pleased with him) heard it from the Holy Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him) that once there was a woman who captured a cat and kept it in captivity without giving it any food or drink. On account of such an ill-treatment to a helpless animal, she had to suffer and was cursed by the Almighty Allah. On the other hand, when a person saw a thirsty dog and gave him cold water to drink, he was amply rewarded by Allah for his good deed.

Hazrat Abu Huraira (may the blessings of Allah be on him) has reported that the Holy Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has clearly remarked that any good deed in respect of an animal would be rewarded by the Almighty Allah (Al-Muslim).